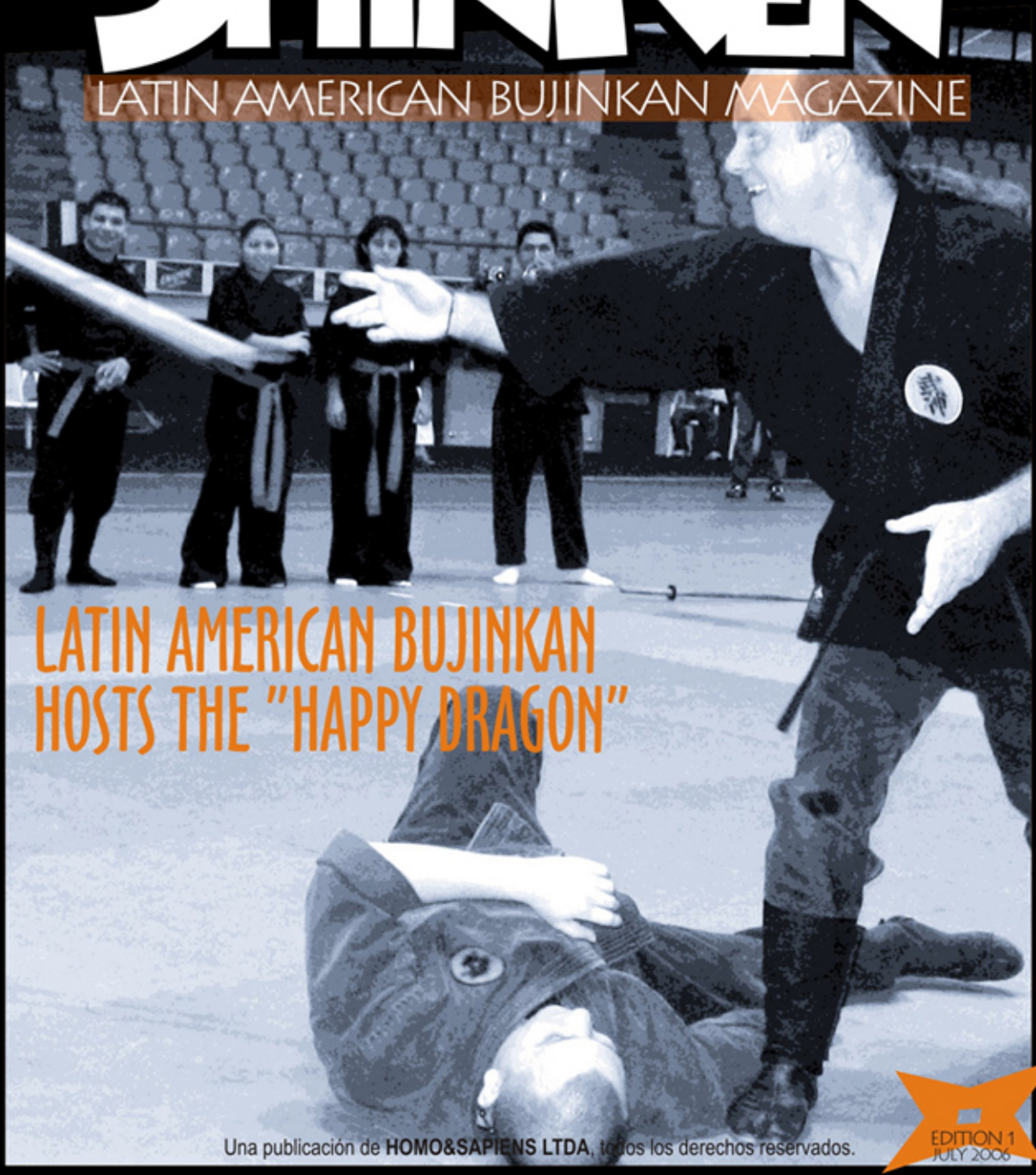
真剣 SHINKEN

武神

LATIN AMERICAN BUJINKAN MAGAZINE



LATIN AMERICAN BUJINKAN HOSTS THE "HAPPY DRAGON"

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Shinken a cut in time

By Ricardo Zapata, ShidoshiHo
IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia Manager

Fruitful encounters always encourage wonderful ideas to be born ideas which can preserve the moment of that special encounter as it was forever. Our publication's title, SHINKEN, is inspired by the teachings presented by Master Richard Van Donk during the 1st Continental Bujinkan Ninjutsu Seminar held in San Salvador in May of this year.

Shinken is really the mastering of time and space and for me it's as if time froze that brief instant of joy we all experienced in beautiful and warm San Salvador at Shihan Van Donk's Shinken Shiraha Dome Seminar. This is what SHINKEN is to me, a total control of time and space for that beautiful moment full of knowledge, commitment, joy and friendship.

The idea of starting this magazine bloomed from the desire to integrate a beautiful community and give it voice. It is a dream of many, this joint dream of the Bujinkan. The word shinken expresses the same essence for all of us who train, it implies those words that mark, that cut and leave footprints in our time and space, in our lives. It is like that live sword, that royal sword that makes its first cut today with our publication; SHINKEN is now born to leave an inerasable cut in time.

This space will be a space for us all to promote our dreams, a place to freeze moments, a place to make a family, to learn and share knowledge.

I owe this inspiration to my dear Professor Richard, and ask you, my fellow dream mates, in your effort to build a united Bujinkan let's work together to unite and not to divide.

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A Dream Becomes More Real

By Luis Bernal, Shidoshi
Manager, Bujinkan El Salvador Association

I am so thankful for the opportunity to open these communication channels which are so important among the members of the Bujinkan Central America - South America and United States. This effort of beginning a magazine like ***SHINKEN*** will allow us to grow integrally (Tatsujin) within each one of our countries and to be part of a cohesive net (Buffû Ikkân) of thoughts, ideas, knowledge, necessities and many other things that will rebound to us both physically and in our spiritual and cognitive wealth.

It is a product of our effort as a team that we were able to integrate many countries in our 1st Continental Seminar of Ninjutsu, thanks to the intermediation of our dear Shihan Richard Van Donk to whom we owe a lot. We surrendered our hearts to his teachings and friendship.

The year 2001 marked the beginning of an expansion plan for the growth of the Bujinkan in the Central American area. From El Salvador, this meant traveling a lot to the other six countries to look for an interested Bujinkan member from each country, a person willing to help reach the vision we intended for the year 2006.

Exactly those countries were present at the seminar plus one more: Colombia! The representatives from Columbia were introduced to new friends that also share our concerns with security and safety. Everything was incredible and so full it could not have been better and for this I rejoice!!!

Shihan Van Donk filled us with positive energy, with a charm that we saw flow in each scene on the tatami, a tremendous energetic force that emanated from inside of him.

The reflective teachings of Soke Hatsumi have been made to germinate in us with our constant training. In my case the hardest blows that I received were to my ego from the live newspaper interview. I am even now recovering from it all and this, I believe, is the true path on the way to budoka that it takes to grow.

Each country's representative demonstrated his love for Budo: Colombia his passion, Panama his bravery, Honduras his flexibility, Guatemala his dynamism, Nicaragua his stories and folklore, Costa Rica his style and El Salvador his timing; in short each one imprinted their own touch upon the event, but all in the unison of the heart (Magokoro).

Thank you friends, Buyu of each country that made of this dream a reality: Ricardo Zapata (Colombia), Edwin Reyes and Sara (Guatemala), Carlos Castro (Honduras), Alexis (Nicaragua), Sergio Court (CostaRica), Fernando Fábrega (Panama).

Thank you Shihan Richard Van Donk that you demonstrated for us that all dreams can be completed. You serve as a guide for us and we have a very long and touching road!

BUJINKAN TODAY

Courtesy of: THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION BUJINKAN DOJO COLOMBIA
http://ninpocolombia.com

1st CONTINENTAL NINJUTSU SEMINAR: THE TRANSFORMATION 2006

A happy encounter with the one Teacher Richard Van Donk, a successful full event with techniques of life and spiritual transformation.

SHINKEN SHIRAHA DOME was the concept taught by Instructor Richard Van Donk (Director of the IBDA) who has a Menkyo Kaiden (15th Dan) maximum grade achievable by followers of the art of Ninjutsu. More than 50 visits to Japan and 45 years inside the martial world classify him as a faithful exponent of the techniques of Masaaki Hatsumi, who he visits 1 or 2 times a year.

The Ist Continental Seminar of Ninjutsu carried out in El Salvador extended its wings through 9 countries that converged in their lines of training for the event. Each technique was characterized with our guest Instructor's happiness: years ago Master Van Donk took the name of 'HAPPY DRAGON', a name given to him by his teacher, Hatsumi Sensei. "My teacher Richard is an impressive being, a source of pure happiness...he is always happy and radiating this happiness to others. His teachings take us into being definitively better human beings...". This is the way it was expressed by Shidoshi-ho Ricardo Zapata (Director of the IBDA Dojo for Colombia) who received a gift of a painting from Sensei Hatsumi for his dojo. This was presented to him by Professor Richard Van Donk, along with a certification of Shidoshi-ho.

Master Van Donk also delivered grade promotion ranks to Ricardo Zapata Nidan (2 Dan) and RokuDan (6 Dan) for Shidoshi Luis Bernal, President of the Association Bujinkan of El Salvador. In the same way Shidoshi Luis Bernal made delivery of the grade of Nidan to his direct student Shidoshi-ho Fernando Fabregas (Bujinkan Panama).

This event completes part of the Strategic Plan of the Bujinkan Association of El Salvador, which realized one of its main goals, to unite Central America and extend its expectations and integrate a South American country, Colombia, which supported the efforts in every moment to build and to make reality this fabulous event. Shidoshi Luis Bernal, President of the Salvadoran organization Bujinkan, got this dream impelled by an entire professional cortege of its students and collaborators, all them inspired by the love of Budo, the union of a single Bujinkan organization and the teaching of authentic Ninjutsu.

Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Nicaragua, and the United States, among other countries, were part of this intense seminar occurring the 27th and 28th of May 2006 in the Sport Coliseum of the INDES in San Salvador.

Black Belt Distant Learning System of Study IBDA in Spanish

By Ricardo Zapata, Shidoshi-Ho
Managing IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia

To learn martial arts from videos? It sounds like hundreds of those other products that promote themselves to us by television, but the reality is that this system is being employed in more than 80 countries and daily growing. It gives a solid structure in the knowledge of the 9 martial traditions of the Bujinkan. The Black Belt Distant Learning Study System of the IBDA (Division of Bushindo University Inc) is an excellent study guide to get the understanding of the teachings of Shihan Richard Van Donk and the legacy of the Great Teacher Masaaki Hatsumi at a level of high quality.

Perhaps to many it could seem that this is an "easy" system of learning, but those that have attempted it know that the knowledge they have received is structured and well grounded, and beyond being a form of seemingly easy learning it takes you where you want to go, giving you new possibilities for persevering and perfecting your techniques in your study in the Bujinkan. The "easy" part of this teaching program is really that it is available worldwide. Distant Learning Study Systems base their method on the student's own self-discipline so of course the rigorousness with which the student studies determines how well they develop at each level. But the truly crucial decision maker in deciding to get a Distant Learning Course like this is whether you will be able to get your learning objectives accomplished with quality instruction under this system. This Black Belt Distant Learning Course gives you that quality of instruction. There are many instructors of high rank around the world that began with this very system, and that nowadays use this study curriculum as a guide in teaching their own students. This is fantastic, because besides being formed yourself by this system, it helps you to continue on in your future teaching as an instructor.

IBDA Colombia supports and believes 100% in this education system, because it is a great help to all those with little or no possibility of having contact with good teachers with a solid structure because of the lack of these close by in towns (countries, municipalities). It is also very good for those that want to settle down inside its learning with good instructors and a solid, detailed structure but don't have the time to travel to a dojo.

Our organization has taken the great task of producing a version in Spanish of all the fantastic contents in the teachings of Shihan Richard Van Donk (Menkyo Kaiden - 15 dan), giving the opportunity for the community of Hispanic speakers to acquire these courses and to follow the studies of the Ninjutsu Budo Taijutsu. The project is led by Ricardo Zapata Shidoshi-ho, Director for Colombia of the IBDA Branch Dojo.

The ability to be evaluated for ranking with the Black Belt Distant Learning System studies is one of the particulars of this magnificent system, because up to Shodan (1st degree black belt) the student can record a series of videos demonstrating their ability and fluency in each technique for that level and receiving rank from Japan. The student also has the option of being evaluated in person by coming to a camp. When you are ready to test for your Black Belt you will need to come to a seminar or camp to test in person. The review panel for the examination is demanding and you must show good flow and good technique to achieve your Black Belt. You cannot get a Black Belt just by buying the Distant Learning Course; it is your desire and steady practice that gets you a Black Belt through the IBDA. IBDA Colombia will be a support for this evaluation system, this way the towns near to ours will have support for their examinations. Also we offer information through private classes, seminars or special shops.

The Distant Learning Program has a curriculum that ascends from the basic levels 9th-1st Kyu until the advanced levels of Black Belt 1-10th dan.

We invite all those that want to enjoy this innovative system that gives you a strong base in the art of Bujinkan Ninja to contact us at our official web page: **www.Ninjutsu.Com** and **NinpoColombia.Com.**

Interview With Master Richard Van Donk

ByBety Teague RADIO MUNDO, El Salvador

This interview took place the day before the fabulous event. The full version has been shortened from the original due to limited space. If you would like to hear the original with the actual questions to Master Van Donk please go to: ***http://www.ninpocolombia.com/entrevista*** *and there you will be able to listen to it.*

RM= Radio Mundo
RVD= Richard Van Donk

RW. And this Master with one of the highest ranks in the world is an authentic Ninja. He has already been 45 years in the martial arts and many years inside this discipline. We will have the pleasure of greeting him and asking him some questions because he has written a book that called Mastering Your Life: A Guide for Transformation...
What does it mean to master your life?

RVD. In the first place I am very grateful to have the opportunity to travel to El Salvador and the power to share this with you.

RW. What is your participation in this event?

RVD. I am here really to make better the life of people through this Bujinkan art with 2000 years of existence, to improve our abilities and to live a more effective life. A lot of people think that the training is physical defense but besides training physically with the sword you will learn many spiritual aspects.
The seminar that I will be leading will be for beginners and advanced, we will have a lot of good times and we will learn many things. The topic of the seminar is Shinken Shiraha Dome which is avoiding the attack of the alive sword. Participants will learn how at the same time to cut through the illusions of Life, because when distancing ourselves when somebody cuts at us with the sword, these same principles can be applied to learn how to be distanced from our emotions, in fact I will be teaching this as being a better person, improving the posture, the interior power, to have a clear mind, to respect all things, to understand what is actually passing with life and to act correctly instead of simply reacting and finally in the end the thing is to be happy. The first posture that we will learn will be Kokoro No Kamae, that is to have a happy heart. And everybody needs this, to help us help each other to have a better life and to make things the best thing they can be.

RW. It is what we all want... Why do they call you the 'Happy Dragon' Teacher?

RVD. Ha Ha Ha, It's a good problem, I am always happy and I try to make sure that all are happy around me. It is the most important thing that we should look for in life, after love. The purpose of life is to enjoy it more. Many people have problems in their minds, so they have to learn how to be happy because that it is the reason. If they want to know more than this they can visit my website: www.ninjutsu.com or better yet visit us in the seminar which I will personally teach as living better plus how to manage a sword...Don't Worry! Be Happy!.

RM. Thank you Master.

RVD. The pleasure is mine!

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真剣 Shinken Shiraha Dome

By Ricardo Zapata, ShidoshiHo
Director IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia

"All the swords in the world are yours, therefore they will return to you without any fear." With this idea Shihan expressed the way to appreciate the weapon that tries to cut you in those seconds of life or death, where each millimeter of closeness to the metal may fatally cut you. You must not fear because the sword is yours, if this is so then she must return to her rightful owner. "All the swords of the world are mine, so to me they must return", just catch it skillfully and take it with you once again. To do this you must be fast and anticipate your opponent's movements, your timing must be perfect. Under this concept the teachings rest, profound and complex in the sense that it works physical coordination along with the mastery of the fear of dying at the hands of a real sword (Shinken translates real sword). The Shinken concept also has other implications in the spiritual and mental realm, since it takes us beyond the physical aspect and applies in the same way to the states of emotional control and our heart's feelings. Training with the blade gives us the tools to cut through life's illusions, one of which is evading the temporary emotions of the moment so that we can continue on our true path. Since illusion is everywhere, we need a strong and sharp blade to cut through the falsehoods and focus on our desires, overcoming obstacles and attaining our highest realizations as people. Our training in Shinken prepares us to overcome the physical aspect and elevate this learning to the spiritual one. In our daily lives we find many live sword attacks coming at us in our jobs, homes, streets, circle of friends and couples relationships; and it is in those moments that the concept SHIN takes life, is applicable, is understood and utilized to evade those cuts that so frequently we receive. Today we have an effective tool to take what's ours or to return that attack in a positive way for our relationships and ourselves, finding harmony, disarming the armed, and teaching a better way.

All the swords in the world are yours

Shinken's techniques demand a high confidence in oneself and the ability to connect with the opponent's time and space, feeling you are inside him and that his weapon is yours. This implies a high mental and physical training to succeed triumphantly in the exercise of life or death. The techniques of MutoDori are part of the building blocks of the practice of Shinken Shiraha Dome, since within them lies the root of the evasive formula when we find ourselves unarmed against a sword (Kensabaki).

Shinken possesses a unique pattern for the manipulation of the Daisho (Long and short sword) that with mastery uses these two weapons against the enemy, whether they are drawn (Iai) or not (Noto).

To master these techniques means having the first part of any attack that threatens our lives, our harmony or our happiness itself, under control. Shinken teaches us to manipulate and control attacks of emotion and parry them back so as to continue on the path of our goals and objectives, cutting with illusion's sharp edge in the end.

Master Van Donk applies Shinken techniques to Shidoshiho Ricardo Zapata.

KUNOICHI, Women Ninja.

By Zaira Tinoco Mendoza
IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia

In antiquity the women who trained in Ninjutsu were called kunoichi. Warring women, pioneers in the knowledge and preparation, spies and with great fighting capacity whose main mission was deceit that elicited certain wanted behaviors of the opponents, then taking advantage of their vulnerability. These women infiltrated in the enemy's day-to-day activites until the boss arrived to complete their purpose, which was to destroy or to take the wanted information. These women were perfectly trained in emotional manipulation and they infiltrated in an easier way because of a culture and time where women would have little training and knowledge of war and were underestimated by society.

According to Hatsumi Sensei in one of his publications he expresses that women Ninja were called this way referring to their advantage on the masculine gender. This advantage refers to a woman possessing one more hole in her body than a man. While the masculine gender has 9 holes in its body, the women possess 1 more; kunoichi (9 in 1). The kunoichi were loaded with emotional and intuitive nature and they were trained to find the weak physical and emotional points of the opposite sex. Some of the weapons dominated by these women were: Cat fingernails (Nekote), Boshuriken used as hair picks, knives, small and sharp daggers (Aikuchi), and powder holders (Metsubishi) loaded in different receptacles placed in easy reach on the body among others. Their missions were framed in the social necessities of the time and likewise the use of the weapons. Ninjutsu as taught nowadays searches its knowledge to be used for improvement, is it possible to surrender one to the other one and to work for a better world? Keeping in mind woman's nature, what is the mission of today's kunoichi?

In a world that has lost the fundamental directions and the nature of each thing (between that of being man and being woman), it is necessary for the training of women combatants to have clear missions for improving today's world. A woman is by nature sensitive and intuitive, she possesses a high development of intelligence and of causal thought. She is also a fighter, but unfortunately in these occasions she usually abandons her fundamental nature (the one of being, for example, mother). In a fighting context we can still seek to carry out a different proposition for women who wish to undertake this mission on the way to Budo.

A different proposal:

The commitment begins with the way of thinking: we must keep it live and real and never ending. The commitment should be social, participating in diverse institutions, in our families, in the organizations where we work and in our social supports. The kunoichi believes in a superior being, she is venturesome, a fighter when necessary and independent yet without leaving her feminine nature behind. This woman should be qualified to maintain her family, her company, her society and her country in good health. She should take part in movements for social help regarding the main problems of the present time (ecology, drug addiction, prostitution, pornography, domestic violence, labor exploitation, corruption in organizations, dysfunction and family rupture, family planning, and the crime rate in all contexts, (among others that are not mentioned), for she should possess a pure heart through which noble men are made a reality. It is important to also learn humility as she walks through life. Her professional and artistic preparation should leave a permanent mark on the people around her

What and who will she defend, what will she attack?

She will defend the middle way, she will get ready globally, will use language to attack injustice. Her weapon will be meditation and prayers through which she requests to God for power and grace. She will defend against the dissolution of the family, selfishness and false freedom, fight against weakness, and denaturalization of women. Her weapon is the example she makes of herself, her love and fertile capacity. Her weapon will be the creating of support groups for any current problem.

Her weapon will be eating well, taking care of her health and that of her family's health, maintaining her house in order and contributing to a happy family life.

Not everyone has to physically fight.The main thing is to believe in God and in silence to dialogue with Him, to want and to work for a better world. To respect the differences of each human being, to commit to the work of educating, to maintain the capacity to be able to fight if needed, to take care of the physical and emotional health of herself and that of her family, to stay active, to eat healthily, to rest enough, to carry out exercises of physical and emotional preparation, to maintain her physical qualities, to administer time correctly - it is important not to abandon time for the family. Get yourself ready profess ionally and artistically and make innovation in all the environments of your life. And of course find time to Relax

If at some time in the past the kunoichi studied a man's weaknesses to work him and to defeat him in order to fulfill her mission successfully, today's mission is not to defeat man, but to defeat that weak part of society that every time deteriorates our lives more and to commit to improve the world.

"The family is the main structure of the society."

"Of each 100 community homes in Cartagena, there is in 90 % of them abandonment of at least one parent, mother or father."

Panamá

Estimados buyus:

Dear Buyus:
I want to tell you that it was a great honor to meet a Master like Shihan Richard Van Donk for me and for my student Abdiel De La Rosa. We learned several new techniques and several new protocols with the sword along with lots of philosophy. I could also notice that Shihan Richard is a great person: he has a very happy character and yet is strict when he has to be.
I believe we must follow the example of this great master who is also an entrepreneur. He started out with nothing, very few opportunities in his life and lots of family problems, yet managed to acquire a very good economic position, and obtain great success and recognition.
It was also very interesting and exciting to be able to share with different brothers from Central America and Colombia!
Many of my students had great interest in being part of this wonderful Shinken Shiraha Dome Seminar but due to either work or economic reasons, were not able to attend. I will do my best to bring some of it to them through a seminar I will carry out on July 2nd at my dojo, where they will get to know about the great master and the fellow buyus from Central America and Colombia through photos and some videos.

Bufu Ikkan
Shidoshi-Ho Fernando Fábrega R.
NIDAN - Bujinkan Panamá

Costa Rica

"The experiences that we have day by day are unrepeatable."

This sentence should be with us every day of our life to live life to fullness. When training hurts or when not, we should appreciate each instant in the dojo with our partners and teachers because tomorrow they will not be there with us.
If we don't have that understanding we will stagnate and we will fall in a dangerous conformism, limiting us to just repeating techniques, attacks and how the freedom of our movement was limited this can generate apathy and lack of interest in the training.

Many people arrive to my dojo and they tell me that they have the discipline to learn but after some few days or months they retire with such excuses as: It is "very technical", it is "very soft", it is "too strong and of a lot of contact" or the most ridiculous of all "I don't have time! " among many more. In all the Bujinkan Dojos of the world the same thing happens; if you are not willing of mind and heart your body can have unpleasant surprises and therefore you won't be able to learn.
When I began in the Bujinkan it was an awakening, I had already spent 12 years in the martial arts when I met my teacher, Happy Shidoshi Antonio García.
During the trainings I realized that I was not wise in anything of the Martial Arts and all my outlines and theories went up in smoke. If I had not accepted my ignorance nor removed the pride that I had of competition I would not have felt the peace that I feel sitting here now.

At the moment I am the first Instructor of Bujinkan in my country and as well as my other Central American siblings we have had difficult situations, but in spite of this we follow it fighting to grow and to be an example for what we begin. This is what we call Budo, the daily training of adaptability. If we don't adapt we don't grow and if we don't grow we won't learn anything.

When you sit down with desires of abandoning the training, do you think well, do you leave for fear? For laziness? Because you don't have the willpower or discipline?

These you wonder about they leave because it is difficult to see the invisible thing we get from the training that is the explanation, we all go by similar moments and with other circumstances of life.

We have to learn how to flow (nagare) with the events so that everything arrives to a good finish. If you want things to come out well in your life you should adapt to standing up alone as a whole person: in this way you will be a worthy human being.

One should take stock of himself everyday and learn to make corrections; this way you will get the peace to learn Budo Taijutsu. Listen to your teacher, he has gone through similar things and has experience - but remember you don't follow your teacher, you follow the path that your teacher himself looks for.

Sergio Salas, Shidoshi Ho
Bujinkan Costa Rica

El Salvador

THE SOURCE:

One day more! No, it is not one day more! Today is the special day of the training with Teacher Richard Van Donk and to share the feeling of Budo Taijutsu that we inherit from Sensei Hatsumi with the Central American Buyus and South Americans that called. It is the day that we put it into practice in our lives, physically, mentally and spiritually.
One special moment of the many that I lived and I shared with the buyus in a relaxed way was when Shihan Van Donk explained to us how we could move and feel inside the water. I was able to feel the rise of the water in the palms of my hands and such a relaxed breathing that I could move from a very different and flowing way into that Budo Taijutsu of the Bujinkan.
It is necessary to often recount and to share about this beautiful event called THE SOURCE. I believe that each one of us who was present took into our hearts an experience of this Bujinkan martial art that unites us without opposition.

Thanks to all the buyus.

Vismark Quintanilla, Shidoshi-ho
Bujinkan El Salvador

Colombia

It is very pleasant to feel that our circle of friends grows: in the Bujinkan I have felt that magic experience. To arrive to a strange land and to feel as if I was at home sharing with friends of an entire lifetime, friends that share one's own dream, the Ninjutsu Budo Taijutsu of our dear Sensei Hatsumi. An extraordinary sensation definitively, when you feel that heart companionship on the part of a practitioner of the Bujinkan, you feel in him a true gentleman, a true warrior, very far from the hate, the resentment, the envy that should not be housed in our hearts. In El Salvador I found very good people, very kind people of everything Central American.
The meeting with my guide in the Bujinkan (Teacher Richard Van Donk) was exceptional! To be attending him as an UKE in his valuable teachings allowed me to feel his spirit in the Taijutsu, a transmission really of heart to heart (Shinden). Richard is a human being that teaches techniques of life, techniques of success, techniques to be winning and victorious warriors in our daily routine of life. He is an exceptional Teacher.
Luis Bernal's family was very welcoming, to them I send many blessings. To all my new friends I give a strong hug, and they know that they have in Colombia a gentleman Bujinkaner that esteems them and is holding a space for a next encounter opportunity in my country.

Ricardo Zapata, Shidoshi-Ho
IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia

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Honduras

KOFUKURYU AND THE POWER OF THE SWORD

A couple of weeks ago I went to the Ist Continental Seminar of Budo Taijutsu in our brother country of El Salvador where I had the pleasure to share with my great martial family, the Bujinkan Dojo, and to receive the teachings of the 'Happy Dragon', Shihan Richard Van Donk, who with his charisma and happiness shared with us a great message of happiness.

In this seminar, whose topic was Shinken Shiraha Dome, (a topic unknown by many of us in its entirety) should I admit that my first impression, like in many occasions in the Bujinkan was, what is that? to what school does it belong? When not having an answer I did suppose that it was something related with the topic of the year (SHIZEN). Does my imagination work or not? (ha ha) And it stopped my curiosity when I found out that it was not this way, even though in some ways yes, since the feeling of Shizen is something that we should apply to everything that we do and not in fact just inside the dojo.

After my arrival, full of many difficulties and full of sharing nice moments with my siblings of the Budo, I arrived at the prospective moment all serious already one day before Shihan Richard commented to us that Shinken Shiraha Dome didn't belong to any of the 9 ryuha which comprise the Taijutsu of the Bujinkan, but instead to a school practiced by Sensei with his old teacher of Kobudo, Takeshi Ueno. This school is the Bokuden Ryu.

Good, now had arrived the moment of the training that clarified my expectations. For the first time I had the wonderful experience, the pleasure, of training with a Shihan JuGodan Menkyo Kaiden, I got to experience the unforgettable, a lot of feeling!

Although mentally I was overwhelmed by difficulties that were liberated in those moments, I tried to open my heart and to feel to the maximum. Although my emotional state fell and it prevented me flowing as I wanted to, I had in mind that the warrior's heart is valuable and essential and I decided to surrender to the feeling. Although the technique didn't flow as I had wanted, in that moment my heart was impregnated with feelings of the memory of the words of Shihan Richard, "I come to share happiness. I will show how the power of the sword cuts away the false illusions of your life. I perceive these illusions, like emotions, and with the proper distancing we can cut the veil that prevents us from seeing what is really there and then learn to be happy".

Among other words that I remember from Shihan Van Donk are that "Shinken Shiraha Dome" means to "stop the attack of the live sword".

At the same time we can interpret Shinken Shiraha Dome in many ways as in stopping a real action. Shinken Shiraha Dome, as all that we study in the Bujinkan, is not something that we can frame in a single concept. It is feeling, without form, but with feeling. Shihan Van Donk showed us many techniques and kamae but I believe that the most important is his secret key of the Shinken Shiraha Dome - it is in the Kokoro no Kamae (the posture of our heart). We can interpret 'Shin' like mind, heart, life, something latent, and 'Ken' as a blow, or impact, 'Shiraha' as an attack, a threat, an action of damage and 'Dome' as to stop.

I believe that if we take these words and appropriate them in our heart we can really speak to each other of this topic. Meanwhile I will tell you something that was the slogan of Shihan: Keep training, Keep going. Let us take the Budo to all our life, remembering that it is in everything we do. As an anecdote I will tell you of the moment I made an escape before a descending attack (shomen).

At this time I was practicing with Ricardo Zapata doing an evasion technique when Shihan came near and told me to do something with my body movement. I was moving away too much and too fast from a straight down overhead cut from Dai Jodan . My English translation was not very clear of the advanced concept, but Ricardo helped me and I committed myself to what Shihan told me to do and then treated going into the movement with an open heart, doing my best to summon muso (feeling without thinking) of the bokken. Within moments Ricardo did the shomen attack and I moved but I felt as if I would be struck by the bokken as the attack was given with strong intent. As I was reaching the clear mind state it was as if I had seen it all happen so slowly and time held contrary forces chasing away the little fear that had begun to enter the space as the descending sword cut came down. The experience was so wonderful as he made me remember that I am ALIVE feeling fear. Fear in that moment felt like a pail of cold water thrown on me to wake me up. jejeje Maybe I was failing in the routine of the mechanics, but to be able to do budo I felt and I believe that it is this way with that feeling that one should work the Shinken Taihenjutsu with the heart, feeling in each instant the way to live.

Let us don't forget that feeling fear and pain is something natural in man and evokes in all of us the

same life, let us be reminded of the words of Hatsumi Sensei: a movement without the heart is a movement without life. We have to live intensely in Sanshin (3 hearts alone yet you feel it as one) enjoying what we do, diving into a world without form on our way to freedom. We then do not become apprentices of the world of madness anymore and it is there, with good Kokoro no kamae, that it is possible to perceive the essence of Budo.

Let us remember that the Kata is dead and we are alive if we are able to feel each instant in the Budo with all our being. Therefore take each waza, transcending it until you know it well, then creating Henka (variations) and adapting them to our environment- this is Ninpo: change, adaptation, resistance, perseverance...
When speaking of this experience I am trying to share and to make stand out that the message of happiness is what training in the Bujinkan leaves us with day to day. It may only take a one time understanding like my sword experience to feel the purity of the art. It was amazing for me to have stopped time, to see the material thing, (the bokken in this occasion) to perceive the threat, and avoid the attack of the alive" sword with a feeling of pure heart. This feeling, achieved by surrendering with purity, is also called Kishin Kigan (Seeing with the Eyes and Heart of God).
Let us continue ahead as apprentices of the formless, breaking concepts, living in the path of freedom.

A greeting to all and like my friend Sequeira says, this Thirsty Latin Body of Love tells you again:

Keep Going & Keep Training!

Carlos Castro, Shodan
Bujinkan Honduras

Yugei

Since I have involved myself in the activities and knowledge that the Bujinkan includes, I have undertaken a path that I am surprised by day by day. It is really magnificent to have found an art that really embodies one on the way to being a real warrior. Although it certainly shares activities like the learning of a technique of defense in the same way as other martial sport disciplines, in the Bujinkan we have become trained that it is necessary to always go beyond the technique, so much in its execution as in its mindless, formless state.
It is there where I have been able to perceive the beauty of the technique that combines in a harmonious mixture of force, fineness, softness and life that I can only compare to the feeling that I enjoy while I draw a portrait or I mix colors when painting a square. Plus still, each thing that is memorized during the training and the interpersonal relationships that settle down day by day is part of an inexplicable dance of harmonic movements that build our body and our mind little by little into a true human being, aware of its capacities and its weaknesses. The Bujinkan is a place in which people are able to come closer to an opportunity to express themselves internally as feelings are channeled into the expression of a technique that, far from being a memorized or stylized movement, is an alive expression of a feeling in action or an objective movement. Being able to be soft and encircling until potent, impetuous and devastating, just as it leaves the one who has created it, the technique becomes a movement with life, with feeling. However, it is possible to go further on: harmony and expression can be projected before the daily situations of life, controlling each one of our emotions in the face of our mistakes or our victories, maintaining the sense to be wiser and more cautious before the expectation, and having good sense before an unexpected thing so that neither ten thousand changes are able to surprise us (dominating a state of FudoShin, the unalterable heart).

It is in fact an artist's virtue to be able to capture an expression, a feeling. Although their canvas isn't really alive it is able to make us feel in its representation an emotion of deep sadness. But from where do those sensations that the artist makes us feel come? That question cannot perhaps be answered by any artist in words that we can understand. It is something that can only be explained when we share a feeling 'heart to heart' or when the high level of the artist's creative soul is so powerful that it is able to transmit its feelings by means of its acts. That, the 'yugei', the 'fine art' as we understand it in the west, is something fundamental in order to be able to capture the teachings of Ninpo. The 'yugei' is able to model our perception of life and death and is able to take us to the field of enjoying our existence by the simple act of perceiving it and sharing it with others, making bearable the problems and battles that we free ourselves from daily. Ninpo, for me, has become a true art. Free of the sludge of goals captured in a medal or a trophy, it goes beyond a competition that is decided in five minutes. More momentous than the training inside four walls, it is a lifestyle, a form to perceive reality and to share something of my humanity with any other person around the world. Thousands today need to consciously change their perspective with which they perform their routines. They are living unconsciously, just going through life without much thought for the future. Today I think that thousands of people should learn how to face life with 'yugei'. Today I think that millions of people need to be ninja.
I believe that Sensei Takamatsu would want it this way. Each one of my friends in the entire world, I think that we should try to be a ninja, a Tatsujin.

John Walther Silver 4th Kyu
Bujinkan Honduras

MAINLY

Who does not smile? .. to smile is inherent to the human being, is a fundamental part of us and as such it must never be missing in our daily life.

We are glad for a smile in the heart, it relaxes our body and it comforts us with the spirit of wellness we feel when we laugh, especially when we are contagiously laughing with others.
The Bujinkan has given me that smile that I had lost a long time ago - again I have discovered that a smile and Budo are two big allies that take a human being toward the harmony and the happiness that we all look for.
There is nothing else more devastating for an attacker than a smile from their opponent, and that this is just a simple smile is scary for them.

It is necessary to smile continually; face the difficulties of Life with a great smile and you will see that it is the answer to everything. A lot of people are in constant search of happiness and yet they push to the side that one detail, a smile.

Life itself teaches us that a smile is a great remedy. Who has not suffered an accident and then noticed that it left them safe and sound? Have you not maybe felt horror and yet when leaving unhurt you exploded with laughter? That feels good, doesn't it? It also passes this way with Budo: to constantly practice with hardness and determination is in vain without smiling.
To see Life through a smile is synonymous to being in very good spirits, with good morals and an overall positive mind. To be helped in this way is to unwrap ourselves, to be relaxed and spontaneous: it is as when the little birds sing every morning, that wonderful song that they give us gratuitously and without cost. We should start the day as such, smiling. Isn't it beautiful to get up smiling and cheerful for a new and wonderful day that begins, with so many things to live, and so much to learn - isn't it a better form of beginning the day to smile :)
As I said, the Bujinkan has brought me those desires of smiling, of living Life to fullness, of seeing in each thing of Nature those particulars that modernism and time has atrophied in Man. Budo dictates to me the rules and gives me the freedom of following them.

In my training a smile is an essential and fundamental part. Thanks to the smile I have understood that perseverance and hard training are our best friends that the only thing that they want is for the best thing for us. Since I entered the Bujinkan, Budo is the road that I have chosen to continue in the hand of a SMILE.

Arvid Molina, 8 Kyu
Bujinkan Honduras

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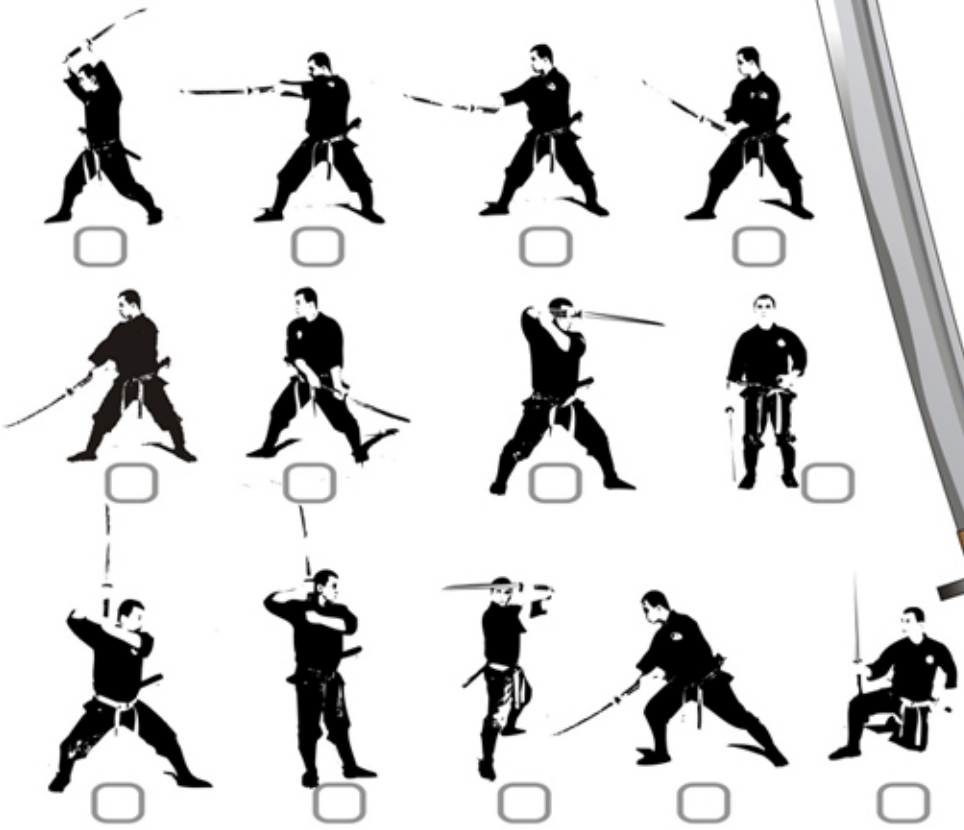
KENJUTSU KAMAE

By Ricardo Zapata, ShidoshiHo
IBDA Branch Dojo Colombia

This first time I find it pertinent to dedicate this section to the kamaes of the Iai-Kenjutsu that Shihan Van Donk taught us. In this way I leave you with good study material for your schools, but as good educator, the information will be left in a didactic way, this way you will be able to recall some memories of the teachings of Shihan Richard... Iai!, Kiri!, Chiburi, No-To!, excellent!.

Place the appropriate number under each image.



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3. SHIZEN
4. DAIJODAN
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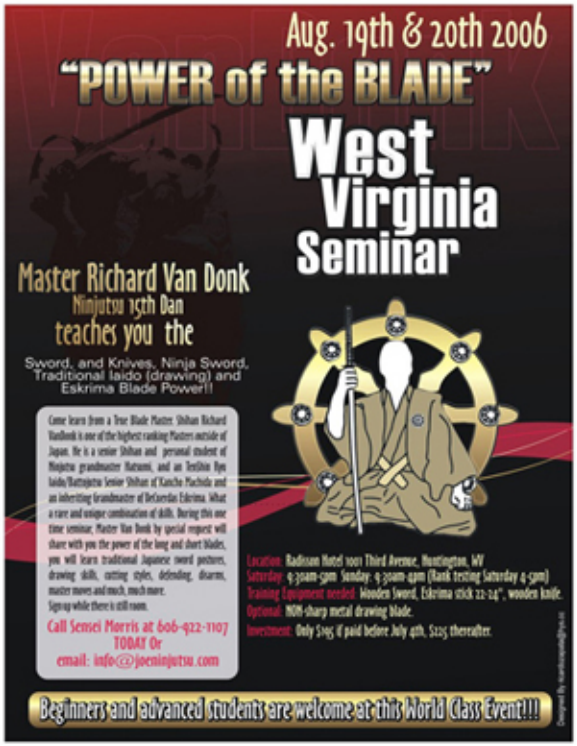
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Día: Sábado 12 de agosto
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